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# Jottings from June: October 2015

As a local church pastor, I always enjoyed this time of year when we return from our summer activities and start the fall program season. Rally Day, Homecoming, new book groups, Bible study starting up again, Sunday School, Youth Group are among all the ministries that encourage and enliven us. It is a reflection of the diversity of people and programs in the church that serve the needs of people to deepen their faith, enrich their worship, increase their knowledge, and provides for faithful fellowship.

This kind of activity is no different in the Conference setting. We just concluded the Southeast Conference Board of Directors retreat. My October calendar includes the Alabama-Tennessee-Mississippi Association meeting, the Southern and Southeast Conferences Retired Servants gathering at Blowing Rock Conference Center; the anniversary celebration at Real Inspiration Ministry (formerly Restoration Inclusive Ministries) in Decatur, Atlanta Pride weekend, the annual meeting of the Council of Conference Ministers, the Southern Region Women's Retreat which Southeast Conference is hosting this year, speaking at the Upper Room Fellowship in Nashville, and attending the organizing meeting of the national UCC Regional Theological Education Consortium of which PATHWAYS is a member.

I get excited when I see the diversity of ways in which the United Church of Christ in our local congregations, within the Conference, and in the wider church meets the needs of its members. I hope you take time to read the article about the Neighbors in Need offering. Southeast Conference churches have been important contributors but have also reaped the benefits of the grants awarded to local projects (see the list in the article). Please take the time to read the Caring Community Prayer List for this month so that we can keep churches and ministers in our thoughts and prayers as they engage in this labor of love called ministry.

As we settle into our activities and begin to look forward to Thanksgiving and Advent, let us be grateful for all the blessings of our respective and common ministries and look forward to the new life that we are offered by the grace of the Spirit moving within and among us.

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